

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05

EB-07 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 SAJ-01

ACDA-05 /097 W

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O R 251630Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2296

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, ECIN, XF, IT

SUBJECT: US/EC CONSULTATIONS: EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE; ROME
MEETING OF EXPERTS

REF: A) ROME 10641; B) DUBLIN 1056

SUMMARY: THE EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE'S "JOINT STERRING COMMITTEE"
ON JULY 24 TERMINATED SUCCESSFUL THREE DAY WORKING SESSION,
WITH SATISFACTORY SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS, AND POLITICIZATION HELD
WITHIN REASONABLE BOUNDS. END SUMMARY.

1. IN CAREFUL BRIEFING MORNING JULY 25 MINISTER BARTOLOMEIO
ATTOLICO (OFFICER DIRECTOR, ME POLITICAL AFFAIRS) COVERED
DEVELOPMENTS OF JULY 23 AND 24. ALL WORKING GROUPS LABORED
"HARD AND WELL AND MADE GOOD PROGRESS." COPIES OF DOCUMENTS
OUTLINING WORK PROGRAMS IN EACH GROUP (REF. B) BEING POUCHED
DEPARTMENT FOR SUCH FURTHER DISTRIBUTION AS MAY BE DESIRED.

2. THE UNDERLYING POLITICAL ISSUE WAS SUPPRESSED, BUT DIDN'T
GO AWAY. IT SURFACED, FOR EXAMPLE, IN FINAL JOINT COMMUNIQUE
AND TEXT OF "JOINT WORKING PAPER" (JWP). ALTHOUGH COMMUNIQUE
NOTES THAT "BOTH SIDES RECOMMEND A MEETING OF ARAB AND EUROPEAN
EXPERTS SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN AN ARAB CITY IN NOVEMBER 1975",
THE PARTIES ALSO RECALLED (JWP) THAT IN CAIRO IN JUNE THEY HAD
AGREED THAT THE "PRESENT MEETING OF EXPERTS WILL BE RESUMED
PERIODICALLY IN THE FORM OF A STEERING COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS
PENDING THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE WHICH IS DESIRED
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE." FOR EMPHASIS THE JWP REPEATS THAT IT IS
"CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT A MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE IS
DESIRED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE" ALTHOUGH THE NEXT SESSION WILL BE
OF EXPERTS."

3. ACCORDING TO ATTOLICO, THE ARAB SIDE PUSHED FOR INCLUSION
IN THE COMMUNIQUE OR JWP OF A JOINT RECOMMENDATION THAT A
MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE SHOULD TAKE PLACE BUT WITH
NO DATE SPECIFIED. THE RATIONALE ADVANCED WAS THAT TECHNICAL
COOPERATION SHOULD PROCEED APACE WITH GROWING POLITICAL
UNDERSTANDING. EUROPEAN SIDE "REFUSED TO ADHERE" TO THIS
RECOMMENDATION BECAUSE A) THE TIME WAS "NOT RIGHT" TO CALL FOR
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A MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE IN THE LIGHT OF "CIRCUMSTANCES"
OUTSIDE THE CONTROL OF DIALOGUE PARTICIPANTS AND B)(CONTRADICTIONILY)
BECAUSE PARTICIPANTS WERE MERE "EXPERTS" AND NOT QUALIFIED TO
DETERMINE WHEN TIME IS RIGHT -- THAT MUST BE LEFT TO GOVERNMENTS.

4. WHILE REFUSING TO JOIN IN A CALL FOR A MEETING OF GENERAL
COMMITTEE, EUROPEAN SIDE FELT IT COULD NOT DECLINE TO REPEAT
THE JUNE CAIRO FORMULATION ("A MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

IS DESIRED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE"), AND AGREED TO REPEATING IT IN THE JWP. HOWEVER, ATTOLICO POINTED OUT THAT SUCH REPETITION DOES NOT RPT NOT COMPROMISE A CALL FOR CONVENING THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

5. ARABS WERE A BIT MIFFED AT EUROPEAN STANCE AND SAID ARAB AGREEMENT TO NEXT MEETING ("IN AN ARAB CITY" AT EXPERT LEVEL) WILL FIRST HAVE TO HAVE THE APPROVAL OF THE ARAB LEAGUE COUNCIL MEETING IN SEPTEMBER. THUS, WORDING OF THE COMMUNIQUE(PARA. 2 ABOVE) COMPRISES A RECOMMENDATION RATHER THAN A DECISION.

6. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, ATTOLICO ADDED THAT HE HAD HAD FEELING THAT ARAB INTEREST IN GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING WAS NOT RELATED TO PLO ISSUE BUT RATHER TO ESCALATE THE "LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE" BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES BY MOVING UP FROM THE TECHNICAL LEVEL. HE SPECULATED, IN PASSING BUT PERHAPS NOT IDLY, THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO IMAGINE A FORMULA WHICH WOULD PERMIT OF A GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING AT A FAIRLY SENIOR LEVEL BUT STILL UNDER THE "NO-LABEL", TWO-SIDES-ONLY APPROACH. UNDOUBTEDLY ARABS WOULD LOOK ON A GENERAL COMMITTEE SESSION AS AT LEAST PARTIALLY A POLITICAL FORUM, BUT THAT THE EUROPEANS WOULD NOT, HE SAID. THUS, IRONICALLY, WHILE EUROPEANS MUST AND OD TELL THE ARABS THAT THEY CONSIDER THE TECHNICAL LEVEL MEETINGS AS "TEMPORARY ARRANGEMENTS WHICH DO NOT PREJUDICE THE INSTITUTIONAL MACHINERY" ORIGINALLY PROPOSED (BY THE EUROPEANS), THE EUROPEAN SIDE, SO FAR AT LEAST, HAS BEEN CONSTRAINED TO DODGE ITS OWN PROPOSED GENERAL COMMITTEE FORMAT AND THE POLITICAL TRAPS BUILT INTO IT.

7. ACCORDING TO ALL WE LEARN SO FAR, PLO REPRESENTATIVES WERE QUIET, SERIOUS AND HARDWORKING. NOT GRATUITOUSLY IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES AS PLO, THEY ALSO MADE NO ATTEMPT TO CONCEAL THE AFFILIATION IN CONVERSATIONS, THEY PRESUMABLY ARE ANXIOUS TO MAKE A SUCCESS OF THIS COLLECTIVE EFFORT; IF THE DIALOGUE BREAKS
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UP AND REVERTS TO BILATERAL CHANNELS,THE PLO IS AGAIN OUTSIDE, LOOKING IN.

8. LIBYA STAYED AWAY THROUGHOUT; ALGERIA AND IRAQ ARRIVED, LATE BUT WELCOME.VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENT DRAFT, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, CONSULTANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ROME10789
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750257-0595
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750721/aaaaassi.tel
Line Count: 159
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 ROME 10641, 75 DUBLIN 1056
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <03 OCT 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US/EC CONSULTATIONS: EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE; ROME MEETING OF EXPERTS
TAGS: PFOR, ECIN, XF, IT, EEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006